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SUBJECT: Iraqi Kurdistan Region Media Summary --
February 12, 2007

11. (U) This is a Regional Reconstruction Team (RRT) cable.

KRG Prime Minister Meets with Undersecretary for Management

12. (U) Major Kurdish media covered the meeting of Undersecretary of State for Management Henrietta Fore and U. S. Regional Coordinator Ambassador James Yellin with KRG Prime Minister Nechirvan Barzani. They discussed the economic, commercial, and investment relations between the United States and the Kurdistan Region as well as cooperation in the areas of human development programs, training, and university scholarships. They also discussed World Bank support for commercial activities.

Palestinian Representative Discusses Refugees with KDP Leaders

13. (U) Major Kurdish media covered the visit of Jibreel Rajoob, the Special representative of the President of Palestinian Authority, to the Kurdistan Region. Rajoob met with KRG President Masoud Barzani, Head of the Kurdistan Democratic Party Political Bureau, Fadhel Mirani, and the President's Chief of Staff, Fouad Hussain. Following the meeting Rajoob held a press conference in which he said, "We do not have any plan to move Palestinian Refugees to Kurdistan."

Rizgar Ali Meets with Sistani and Sadr Reps Over Article 140

14. (U) The PUK-run Kurdistan Nwe newspaper covered a statement by Tamim Provincial Council Chairman Rizgar Ali following a round of meetings. He said, "The meetings were with the representatives of Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani and Muqtada al-Sadr, and some Arab leaders from Kirkuk. They said they will support everything in the Iraqi Constitution." Ali continued, "The resolutions of the Article 140 committee are very positive." The group agreed to hold more meetings and create a "cooperation group" to find solutions for Kirkuk in "an Iraqi and Islamic way."

Women's Conference to be Held March 8th Will Discuss Article 140

15. (U) KRG President Massoud Barzani with KRG Minister for Women's Affairs, Dr. Jinan Jasim, and the President of the Kurdish National Congress of the U. S., Dr. Saman Shali to discuss preparations for the upcoming women's conference to be held on March 8th. KDP-run Khabat newspaper reported that in a separate meeting with KRG Minister of Extra-regional Affairs Muhammad Ihsan, Shali noted the conference will discuss the process for implementing Article 140 and how to get international support for implementation.

Turkish Firm Cuts Power to Dohuk and Mosul

¶6. (U) Major Kurdish newspapers reported that the Turkish company that provides electricity to Dohuk and Ninewa cut power to the two provinces yesterday. The company signed a contract with the Iraqi central government in September 2003 to provide electricity. According to independent newspaper Awene, the Deputy Governor of Dohuk, George Slimon said the contract was supposed to run through March 21, 2007.

Barzani Warns Turkey and Iran

¶7. (U) Khabat newspaper reported an interview of KRG President Massoud Barzani with Al-Sharqiyah. In the interview Barzani said, "We'd like to have friendly relations with both our neighboring countries, Turkey and Iran. But if they try to attack Kurdistan, our reaction will be very hard." Barzani thanked Coalitional Forces for protecting the Kurdistan Region. Regarding Kirkuk, Barzani said "We want to make Kirkuk a model for different nations living together." Regarding independence for Kurdistan, Barzani said "An independent country is one of the rights of Kurdish people."

KRG Approves \$2 Million for Youth Development

¶8. (U) The PUK-run Kurdistan Nwe newspaper reported that the KRG approved a \$2 Million youth development plan. \$300,000 will be spent on each of three scientific centers-one for Erbil, Sulaimaniyah, and Dohuk. The remainder will be spent on youth centers for computer and English-language training in the three KRG provinces and in Kirkuk.

¶9. (SBU) This media summary is prepared by Press and Cultural Specialist Tawar Rasheed.